

**Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families**

Program Office: Office of Child Support Enforcement

Funding Opportunity Title: Special Improvement Project (SIP)

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2006-ACF-OCSE-FI-0005

CFDA Number: 93.601

Due Date for Applications: **05/24/2006**

Executive Summary:

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), invites eligible applicants to submit competitive grant applications for special improvement projects, which further the national child support mission, vision, and goals. Applications will be screened and evaluated as indicated in this program announcement. Awards will be contingent upon the outcome of the competition and the availability of funds. For Fiscal Year (FY) 2006, approximately \$800,000 is available for all priority areas. A non-Federal match is not required.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Legislative Authority

Legislative Authority: Section 452(j) of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 652(j), provides Federal funds for information dissemination and technical assistance to States, training of Federal and State staff to improve child support programs, and research, demonstration, and special projects of regional or national significance relating to the operation of State child support enforcement programs.

Program Purpose and Objectives. To fund a number of special improvement projects, which further the national child support mission to ensure that all children receive financial and medical support from their parents and which strengthen the ability of the nation's child support programs to collect support on behalf of children and families.

OCSE is looking for innovative projects that promote some of the basic themes of the national strategic plan in that child support should be a reliable source of income for families; and that child support agencies should use early prevention strategies to help build a culture of compliance in which parents will support their children voluntarily and reliably. We invite applications for partnerships with entities such as courts and/or tribunals and community- and

faith-based organizations, which have the ability to address the needs of harder-to-serve populations, such as low-income non-custodial parents and culturally diverse populations. Applicants should understand that OCSE will not award grants for special improvement projects that: (a) duplicate automated data processing and information retrieval system requirements or enhancements and associated tasks that are specified in the Social Security Act; or (b) which cover costs for routine activities that would normally be reimbursed under the Child Support Program (e.g., adding staff positions to perform routine child support enforcement (CSE) tasks), or by other Federal funding sources. Proposals and their accompanying budgets will be reviewed from this perspective.

Over the past five years, OCSE has awarded an average of 11 grants per year, totaling approximately \$1.3 million per year. All grant awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds. A non-Federal match is not required. The anticipated start date for the new awards is July 3, 2006; projects under Priority 1 may run through June 30, 2010, for a period of up to 48 months; projects under Priority 2 may run through June 30, 2008, for a period of up to 24 months; and projects under Priority 3 may run through June 30, 2009, for a period of up to 36 months.

Given that the purpose of these projects is to improve CSE programs, it is critical that applicants who are not Title IV-D of the Social Security Act (IV-D) agencies have the cooperation of IV-D agencies to operate these projects. In such instances, the Federal OCSE will provide the State CSE agency the opportunity to comment on the merits of local CSE agency applications before final award. Preference will be given to applicants representing CSE agencies and applicant organizations that have letters of commitment or cooperative agreements with CSE agencies. All applications developed jointly by more than one agency/organization must identify a single lead organization as the official applicant. The lead organization will be the recipient of the grant award. Participating agencies and organizations can be included as co-participants, subgrantees, or subcontractors with their written authorization.

On October 21, 2004, OCSE conducted an audio conference call on "Writing a Grant Application Made Easy." The material presented covered major differences between OCSE's Section 1115 and Special Improvement Project (SIP) grant programs, key elements of OCSE's evaluation criteria, and advice on what to include and common mistakes to avoid. It did not cover the details of the published announcement or discuss the specific priority areas. A text version and link to the audio version of that audio conference will be available on the ACF/OCSE web site, searchable at: <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/>.

Priority Area 1:

Promoting Healthy Relationships for Unwed Couples to Improve Children's Financial and Medical Security

Description

A recent study on child support and minorities indicates that only 50 percent of unwed couples who establish paternity at the time of the birth of their child, establish an order for child support after three years. Often, unwed fathers establish paternity in the hospital directly after the birth

of their children. They provide information regarding their residence and basis for payment of the hospital bills. At this time, the couple may intend to marry soon.

Under this solicitation, OCSE is looking for projects that develop and implement innovative strategies that will lead to regular financial and medical support for children while: (a) minimizing the need for adversarial proceedings, or formal administrative or judicial proceedings, or (b) minimizing the need to take formal or punitive actions to collect support that is owed by a noncustodial parent. Strategies might include the applicant agency and/or its partners encouraging voluntary paternity establishment coupled with providing information (and referral services) to unwed parents about the benefits of healthy marriage and the impact on the financial security of children; and/or providing dispute resolution services for low-income parents regarding child support and visitation matters. Projects should develop and demonstrate creative new ways of periodically getting information to the unwed parents and providing effective long-term follow-up with the couple once the parents leave the hospital.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Anticipated Total Priority Area Funding:	\$1,150,000
Anticipated Number of Awards:	2
Ceiling on Amount of Individual Awards:	\$575,000 per project period
Floor on Amount of Individual Awards:	None
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$575,000 per project period
Length of Project Periods:	48-month project with four 12-month budget periods

OCSE is providing a maximum of \$200,000 for the first 12-month budget period and a maximum of \$125,000 for the three additional 12-month budget periods to provide sufficient time for these projects to finalize activities and evaluation reports. An application that exceeds the upper value of the dollar range specified will be considered non-responsive.

Priority Area 2:

Improving Child Support by Encouraging Parents and CSE Agencies to Work Together for Better Case Management and Results

Description

States report that customer service surveys indicate both custodial parents (CPs) and noncustodial parents (NCPs) often do not provide case-relevant information in a timely matter.

This can result in the setting of inaccurate orders, which, in many cases, is a barrier to collections. On the other hand, there is evidence that agencies may not always respond promptly and accurately to the information provided by NCPs and CPs that can lead to problems such as arrears build-up, undistributed collections, or a shortfall of support.

The presumption is that increased involvement of parents and assurance that agency staff would act quickly on information provided by parents would lead to more accurate orders and collections. Projects would train staff to apply skills and work organization tools that will help workers to consider and approach their customers as partners in the child support process; and provide information to NCPs and CPs in partnering in the progress of their child support cases.

OCSE is looking for innovative strategies for working with parents that are primarily intended to improve performance in key child support measures (found in the National Child Support Enforcement Strategic Plan) and increase healthy family formation. Projects would demonstrate innovative ways to educate parents about the establishment of parentage and their roles and responsibilities in the CSE process and encourage parents to meet those responsibilities. Approaches could include enhanced websites, better service of process, use of stipulated (voluntary) agreements between both parents on child support and related matters, and education on the benefits of healthy marriage formation and referral to appropriate marriage education services. The projects should fit the demographics of the child support caseload in the area where the project would be conducted.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Anticipated Total Priority Area Funding:	\$300,000
Anticipated Number of Awards:	2
Ceiling on Amount of Individual Awards:	\$150,000 per project period
Floor on Amount of Individual Awards:	None
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$150,000 per project period
Length of Project Periods:	24-month project with two 12-month budget periods

OCSE is providing a maximum of \$100,000 for the first 12-month budget period and a maximum of \$50,000 for the second 12-month budget period to provide sufficient time for these projects to finalize activities and evaluation reports. An application that exceeds the upper value of the dollar range specified will be considered non-responsive.

Priority Area 3:

Expand and Improve Enforcement/Collection Tools

Description

In this priority area, OCSE invites proposals that develop and/or improve collection and enforcement methods for those orders that are most difficult to enforce. This priority area supports Strategy 10 in the FY 2005-2009 National Child Support Enforcement Strategic Plan. Strategies may be collaborative in nature and may include creative and innovative methods of enforcing child support orders against obligors who are self-employed, obligors who are part of the underground economy, and/or obligors who may be hiding assets or otherwise evading CSE, perhaps by deliberate unemployment or underemployment. Applicants may also propose projects that tailor enforcement techniques to the obligors' circumstances and record of payment reliability. Strategies could address improvements to current enforcement remedies, such as bank account and asset seizures, passport denial, direct income withholding, filing of liens, or other remedies, in instate or interstate environments.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Anticipated Total Priority Area Funding:	\$300,000
Anticipated Number of Awards:	2
Ceiling on Amount of Individual Awards:	\$150,000 per project period
Floor on Amount of Individual Awards:	None
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$150,000 per project period
Length of Project Periods:	36-month project with three 12-month budget periods

OCSE is providing a maximum of \$100,000 for the first 12-month budget period and a maximum of \$25,000 for the second and third 12-month budget periods to provide sufficient time for these projects to finalize activities and evaluation reports. An application that exceeds the upper value of the dollar range specified will be considered non-responsive.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants:

Eligible applicants for these SIP grants are State (including District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands) Human Services Umbrella agencies, other State agencies (including State IV-D agencies), Tribes and Tribal Organizations, local public agencies (including IV-D

agencies), non-profit organizations (including faith-based and community-based organizations and universities such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities) and consortia of State and/or local public agencies.

Please see *Section IV* for required documentation supporting eligibility or funding restrictions if any are applicable.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: None

3. Other:

D-U-N-S Requirement

All applicants must have a D&B Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S) number. On June 27, 2003, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published in the *Federal Register* a new Federal policy applicable to all Federal grant applicants. The policy requires Federal grant applicants to provide a D-U-N-S number when applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003. The D-U-N-S number will be required whether an applicant is submitting a paper application or using the government-wide electronic portal, Grants.gov. A D-U-N-S number will be required for every application for a new award or renewal/continuation of an award, including applications or plans under formula, entitlement, and block grant programs, submitted on or after October 1, 2003.

Please ensure that your organization has a D-U-N-S number. You may acquire a D-U-N-S number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free D-U-N-S number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or you may request a number on-line at <http://www.dnb.com>.

Proof of Non-Profit Status

Non-profit organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS tax exemption certificate.
- A statement from a State taxing body, State attorney general, or other appropriate State official certifying that the applicant organization has non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.
- A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes non-profit status.
- Any of the items in the subparagraphs immediately above for a State or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

When applying electronically we strongly suggest that you attach your proof of non-profit status with your electronic application.

Private, non-profit organizations are encouraged to submit with their applications the survey located under "Grant Related Documents and Forms", "Survey for Private, Non-Profit Grant Applicants", titled, "Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants", at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>.

Disqualification Factors

Applications that exceed the ceiling amount will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

Any application that fails to satisfy the deadline requirements referenced in *Section IV.3* will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package:

Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement
Division of State, Tribal and Local Assistance
Aerospace Building, 4th Floor - East
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: 202-401-5330
Fax: 202-205-4315
Email: jrobinson@acf.hhs.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

The applicant should clearly indicate in its application(s) for which specific priority area it is applying. Applicants may submit different applications covering different priority areas or they may submit different applications for different projects under one priority area; however, they may not submit one application for the same project covering multiple priority areas. The length of the application, excluding the required application forms, certifications, and resumes, should be about 20 pages, double-spaced format preferred. A page is a single-side of an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of plain white paper. (Applicants are requested not to send pamphlets, maps, brochures or other printed material along with their application as these are difficult to photocopy. These materials, if submitted, will not be included in the review process.) **The project description should include all the information requirements described in the specific evaluation criteria outlined in this program announcement under *Section V*.**

Forms and Certifications

The project description should include all the information requirements described in the specific evaluation criteria outlined in this program announcement under *Section V. Application Review Information*. In addition to the project description, the applicant needs to complete all of the Standard Forms required as a part of the application process for awards under this announcement.

Applicants seeking financial assistance under this announcement must file the appropriate Standard Forms as described in this section. All applicants must submit SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. For non-construction programs, applicants must also submit SF-424A, Budget Information and SF-424B, Assurances. For construction programs, applicants must also submit SF-424C, Budget Information and SF-424D, Assurances. The forms may be reproduced for use in submitting applications. Applicants must sign and return the standard forms with their application.

Applicants must furnish prior to award an executed copy of the SF-LLL, Certification Regarding Lobbying, when applying for an award in excess of \$100,000. Applicants who have used non-Federal funds for lobbying activities in connection with receiving assistance under this announcement shall complete a disclosure form, if applicable, with their application. Applicants must sign and return the certification with their application.

Applicants must also understand that they will be held accountable for the smoking prohibition included within Public Law (P.L.) 103-227, Title XII Environmental Tobacco Smoke (also known as the PRO-KIDS Act of 1994). A copy of the *Federal Register* notice that implements the smoking prohibition is included with this form. By signing and submitting the application, applicants are providing the necessary certification and are not required to return it.

Applicants must make the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. By signing and submitting the application, applicants are providing the necessary certification and are not required to return it. Complete the standard forms and the associated certifications and assurances based on the instructions on the forms. The forms and certifications may be found at:
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>.

Private, non-profit organizations are encouraged to submit with their applications the survey located under "Grant Related Documents and Forms", "Survey for Private, Non-Profit Grant Applicants", titled, "Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants", at:
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>.

Those organizations required to provide proof of non-profit status, please refer to *Section III.3*.

Please see *Section V.1* for instructions on preparing the full project description.

Please reference *Section IV.3* for details about acknowledgement of received applications.

Electronic Submission

You may submit your application to us in either electronic or paper format. To submit an application electronically, please use the <http://www.Grants.gov> site. If you use Grants.gov, you

will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off-line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. ACF will not accept grant applications via email or facsimile transmission.

IMPORTANT NOTE: To submit an electronic application, you must complete the organization registration process as well as obtain and register "electronic signature credentials" for the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). It is important to start this process early, well in advance of the application deadline, since this may take more than five business days.

Please note the following if you plan to submit your application electronically via Grants.gov:

- Electronic submission is voluntary, but strongly encouraged.
- You may access the electronic application for this program on <http://www.Grants.gov>.
- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation. We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov. We encourage applicants who submit electronically to submit well before the closing date and time so that if difficulties are encountered an applicant can still send in a hard copy overnight.
- To use Grants.gov, you, as the applicant, must have a D-U-N-S number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). You should allow a minimum of five days to complete the CCR registration. REMINDER: CCR registration must be updated annually.
- The electronic application is submitted by the AOR. To submit electronically, the AOR must obtain and register electronic signature credentials approved by the organization's E-Business Point of Contact who maintains the organization's CCR registration. Checklists are maintained on <http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>.
- You may submit all documents electronically, including all information typically included on the SF-424 and all necessary assurances and certifications.
- Your application must comply with any page limitation requirements described in this program announcement.
- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. ACF will retrieve your application from Grants.gov.
- ACF may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.
- You may access the electronic application for this program on <http://www.Grants.gov>. You may search for the downloadable application package by the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number.
- You will not receive additional point value because you submit a grant application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit an application in hard copy.

Hard Copy Submission

Applicants that are submitting their application in paper format should submit one original and two copies of the complete application. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by an authorized representative, have original signatures, and be unbound.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Due Date for Applications: 05/24/2006

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is referenced above. Applications that do not meet the deadline requirements will be classified as late and will not be considered in the current competition.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that applications are mailed or hand-delivered or submitted electronically well in advance of the application due date and time.

Mail

Mailed applications shall be considered as meeting the announced deadline if they are either received on or before the due date or postmarked on or before the due date and received by ACF in time for the independent review referenced in *Section V.2*.

Applicants must ensure that a legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark or a legibly dated, machine produced postmark of a commercial mail service is affixed to the envelope/package containing the application(s). To be acceptable as a proof of timely mailing, a postmark from a commercial mail service must include the logo/emblem of the commercial mail service company and must reflect the date the package was received by the commercial mail service company from the applicant. Private Metered postmarks shall not be acceptable as proof of timely mailing. Applicants are cautioned that express/overnight mail services do not always deliver as agreed.

Hand Delivery

Applications hand carried by applicants, applicant couriers, other representatives of the applicant, or by overnight/express mail couriers shall be considered as meeting the announced deadline if they are received on or before the due date referenced above, between the hours of

8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., eastern time, at the address referenced in *Section IV.6.*, between Monday and Friday (excluding Federal holidays).

Electronic Submission

Applications submitted electronically via Grants.gov must be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the due date referenced above.

ACF cannot accommodate transmission of applications by facsimile or email.

Late Applications

Applications that do not meet the requirements above are considered late applications. ACF shall notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in the current competition.

ANY APPLICATION THAT DOES NOT MEET THE DEADLINE REQUIREMENTS ABOVE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR COMPETITION.

Extension of Deadlines

ACF may extend application deadlines when circumstances such as acts of God (floods, hurricanes, etc.) occur; when there are widespread disruptions of mail service; or in other rare cases. A determination to extend or waive deadline requirements rests with the Chief Grants Management Officer.

Receipt acknowledgement for application packages will not be provided to applicants who submit their package via mail, courier services, or by hand delivery. Applicants will receive an electronic acknowledgement for applications that are submitted via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

Checklist

You may use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package.

What to Submit	Required Content	Required Form or Format	When to Submit
SF-424	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due date.

SF-424A	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due date.
Table of Contents	See Section IV.2	Found in Section IV.2	By application due date.
Project Abstract	See Sections IV.2 and V	Found in Sections IV.2 and V	By application due date.
Project Description	See Sections IV.2 and V	Found in Sections IV.2 and V	By application due date.
Budget Narrative/Justification	See Sections IV.2 and V	Found in Sections IV.2 and V	By application due date.
Proof of Non-Profit Status	See Section III.3	Found in Section III.3	By date of award.
SF-LLL Certification Regarding Lobbying	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By date of award.
Certification Regarding Environmental Tobacco Smoke	See Section IV.2	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By date of award.

Additional Forms

Private, non-profit organizations are encouraged to submit with their applications the survey located under "Grant Related Documents and Forms", "Survey for Private, Non-Profit Grant Applicants", titled, "Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants", at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>.

What to Submit	Required Content	Required Form or Format	When to Submit
Survey for Private, Non-Profit Grant Applicants	See form.	See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due date.

4. Intergovernmental Review:

State Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

This program is covered under Executive Order (EO) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

As of August 1, 2005, the following jurisdictions have elected to participate in the EO process: Arkansas, California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands. As these jurisdictions have elected to participate in the Executive Order process, they have established SPOCs. Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of prospective applications and receive instructions. Applicants must submit all required materials, if any, to the SPOC and indicate the date of this submittal (or the date of contact if no submittal is required) on the Standard Form 424, item 16a.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application deadline to comment on proposed new or competing continuation awards. SPOCs are encouraged to eliminate the submission of routine endorsements as official recommendations. Additionally, SPOCs are requested to clearly differentiate between mere advisory comments and those official State process recommendations, which may trigger the "accommodate or explain" rule.

When comments are submitted directly to ACF, they should be addressed to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants

Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW., 4th floor, Washington, DC 20447.

Although the remaining jurisdictions have chosen not to participate in the process, entities that meet the eligibility requirements of the program are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory, Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC. Therefore, applicants from these jurisdictions, or for projects administered by Federally recognized Indian Tribes, need take no action in regard to EO 12372.

The official list, including addresses, of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in EO 12372 can be found on the following URL: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>.

5. Funding Restrictions:

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Applicants should NOT include funds for trips to conferences or to OCSE's Central Office in Washington, D.C., except that they should include the costs of one trip to Washington, D.C. for two days for up to three people. If OCSE requests other such visits, it will reimburse the grantee for them.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this solicitation.

6. Other Submission Requirements:

Please see *Sections IV.2* and *IV.3* for deadline information and other application requirements.

Submit applications to one of the following addresses:

Submission by Mail

Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants
ATTN: Sylvia M. Johnson
Aerospace Building, 4th Floor - West
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW
Washington, DC 20447

Hand Delivery

ACF Mailroom
Aerospace Building, 2nd Floor
901 D Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024
ATTN: Sylvia M. Johnson, ACF
Office of Grants Management
Division of Discretionary Grants

Electronic Submission

Please see *Section IV.2* for guidelines and requirements when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed and reviewing the collection information.

The project description is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139 which expires 4/30/2007.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

1. Criteria:

Part I THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete. It should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing the project description, information that is responsive to each of the requested evaluation criteria must be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

ACF is particularly interested in specific project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

Pages should be numbered and a table of contents should be included for easy reference.

Part II GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING A FULL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Applicants that are required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

PROJECT SUMMARY/ABSTRACT

Provide a summary of the project description (one page or less) with reference to the funding request.

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance must be demonstrated and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the program announcement.

APPROACH

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than others. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished.

For example, increased use of an interstate CSE remedy (such as income withholding, tax refund offset) is projected to have quarterly results of a five percent increase in income withholding collections and a five percent increase in automated enforcement collections. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates. If any data is to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated, clearance may be required from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This clearance pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF." List organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other

key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

If any data is to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated, clearance may be required from OMB. This clearance pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF."

Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

EVALUATION

Provide a narrative addressing how the conduct of the project and the results of the project will be evaluated. In addressing the evaluation of results, state how you will determine the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and the extent to which the accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project. Discuss the criteria to be used to evaluate results, and explain the methodology that will be used to determine if the needs identified and discussed are being met and if the project results and benefits are being achieved. With respect to the conduct of the project, define the procedures to be employed to determine whether the project is being conducted in a manner consistent with the work plan presented and discuss the impact of the project's various activities that address the project's effectiveness.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following are requests for additional information that must be included in the application:

STAFF AND POSITION DATA

Provide a biographical sketch and job description for each key person appointed. Job descriptions for each vacant key position should be included as well. As new key staff is appointed, biographical sketches will also be required.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Provide a budget with line item detail and detailed calculations for each budget object class identified on the Budget Information Form (SF-424A or SF-424C). Detailed calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching is a requirement, include a breakout by the funding sources identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

Provide a narrative budget justification that describes how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

GENERAL

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both Federal and non-Federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are applying. "Non-Federal resources" are all other non-ACF Federal and non-Federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, Federal budget; next column(s), non-Federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

PERSONNEL

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person, provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

TRAVEL

Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. (This item does not include costs of consultant travel).

Justification: For each trip show: the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. Travel costs for key staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops should be detailed in the budget.

EQUIPMENT

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement

purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested provide: a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use on the project; as well as use and/or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

SUPPLIES

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

CONTRACTUAL

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations, including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients, other than States that are required to use 45 CFR Part 92 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 USC 403(11), currently set at \$100,000.

Recipients might be required to make available to ACF pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each delegate agency, by agency title, along with the required supporting information referred to in these instructions.

OTHER

Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: insurance; food; medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional

services costs; space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description and a justification for each cost under this category.

TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES, TOTAL INDIRECT CHARGES, TOTAL PROJECT COSTS

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The following evaluation criteria appear in weighted descending order. The corresponding score values indicate the relative importance that ACF places on each evaluation criterion; however, applicants need not develop their applications precisely according to the order presented. Application components may be organized such that a reviewer will be able to follow a seamless and logical flow of information (i.e., from a broad overview of the project to more detailed information about how it will be conducted).

In considering how applicants will carry out the responsibilities addressed under this announcement, competing applications for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated against the following criteria:

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE - 30 points

The applicant should demonstrate a thorough understanding and analysis of the problem(s) being addressed in the project, the need for assistance and the importance of addressing these problems in improving the effectiveness of the child support program. The applicant should describe how the project will address this problem(s) through implementation of changes, enhancements and innovative efforts, and specifically, how this project will improve program results. The applicant should address one or more of the strategies or approaches described under the specific priority area they are applying for (refer to *Section I*, Priority Areas). The applicant should identify the key goals and objectives of the project; describe the conceptual framework of its approach to resolve the identified problem(s); and provide a rationale for taking this approach as opposed to others.

APPROACH - 30 points

A well thought-out and practical management and staffing plan is mandatory. The applicant should include a detailed management plan that includes timelines and detailed budgetary information. The main concern in this criterion is that the applicant should demonstrate a clear idea of the project's goals, objectives, and tasks to be accomplished. The plan to accomplish the goals and tasks should be set forth in a logical framework. The plan should identify what tasks are required of any contractors and specify their relevant qualifications to perform these tasks.

Staff to be committed to the project (including supervisory and management staff) at the State and/or local levels must be identified by their role in the project along with their qualifications and areas of particular expertise. In addition, for any technical expertise obtained through a contract or subgrant, the desired technical expertise and skills of proposed positions should be

specified in detail. The applicant should demonstrate that persons with the skills needed to operate the project are on board or can be obtained within a reasonable time.

EVALUATION - 25 points

The applicant should describe how the success of this project can be measured and how the success of this project has broader application in contributing to CSE policies, practices, and/or providing solutions that could be adapted by other States/jurisdictions. The applicant should describe the specific results/products that will be achieved; as appropriate, identify the kinds of data to be collected and maintained; describe procedures for informed consent of participants, where applicable, and discuss the criteria to be used to evaluate the results of the project. The applicant should describe the evaluation methodology to be used to determine if the process proposed was implemented and if the project goals/objectives were achieved. Sound evaluations to determine whether or not project goals have been realized are of importance to CSE policy makers and administrators. Thus, the proposal should include a process evaluation component and comparison of before/and after the project's experience, as appropriate, to demonstrate the results achieved.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - 10 points

The project costs need to be reasonable in relation to the identified tasks, including the evaluation component. A detailed budget (e.g., the staff required, equipment and facilities that would be leased or purchased) should be provided identifying all agency and other resources (i.e., State, community, or other programs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or Head Start) that will be committed to the project. Consultant or contractor personnel costs should also be delineated. Applicants should NOT include funds for trips to conferences or to OCSE's Central Office in Washington, D.C., except that they should include the costs of one trip to Washington, D.C. for two days for up to three people. If OCSE requests other such visits, it will reimburse the grantee for them. Grant funds cannot be used for capital improvements or the purchase of land or buildings. Explain why this project's resource requirements cannot be met by the State/local agency's regular program operating budget.

PREFERENCES - 5 points

Preference will be given to those grant applicants representing IV-D agencies and applicant organizations who have documented IV-D agency commitment to the project, either through a cooperative agreement or letter of commitment, which needs to be signed and attached to the application.

2. Review and Selection Process:

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application.

Each application submitted under this program announcement will undergo a pre-review to determine that (1) the application was received by the closing date and submitted in accordance with the instructions in this announcement and (2) the applicant is eligible for funding. It is necessary that applicants state specifically which priority area they are applying for. Applications will be screened for priority area appropriateness. If applications are found to be

inappropriate for the priority area in which they are submitted, applicants will be contacted for verbal approval of redirection to a more appropriate priority area.

Applications that pass the initial ACF screening will be evaluated and rated by an independent review panel on the basis of specific evaluation criteria. The results of these reviews will assist the OCSE Commissioner and program staff in considering competing applications. Reviewers' scores will weigh heavily in funding decisions but will not be the only factors considered.

Applications generally will be considered in order of the average scores assigned by reviewers. However, highly ranked applications are not guaranteed funding because other factors are taken into consideration. These include, but are not limited to, the number of similar types of existing grants or projects funded with OCSE funds in the last five years; comments of reviewers and government officials; staff evaluation and input; previous program performance of applicants; compliance with grant terms under previous U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) grants; audit reports; investigative reports; an applicant's progress in resolving any final audit disallowance on previous OCSE or other Federal agency grants. OCSE will consider the geographic distribution of funds among States and the relative proportion of funding among rural and urban areas. The evaluation criteria were designed to assess the quality of a proposed project, and to determine the likelihood of its success. The evaluation criteria are closely related and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application. Points are awarded only to applications that are responsive to the evaluation criteria within the context of this program announcement.

Federal reviewers will be used for the review process.

Please reference *Section IV.2* for information on non-Federal reviewers in the review process.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications that are approved but unfunded may be held over for funding in the next funding cycle, pending the availability of funds, for a period not to exceed one year.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates:

The anticipated start date for the new awards is July 3, 2006; projects under Priority 1 may run through June 30, 2010, for a period of up to 48 months; projects under Priority 2 may run through June 30, 2008, for a period of up to 24 months; and projects under Priority 3 may run through June 30, 2009, for a period of up to 36 months.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Award Notices:

The successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Financial Assistance Award document which sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-Federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is

contemplated. The Financial Assistance Award will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail.

Organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified in writing.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Grantees are subject to the requirements in 45 CFR Part 74 (non-governmental) or 45 CFR Part 92 (governmental).

Direct Federal grants, sub-award funds, or contracts under this ACF program shall not be used to support inherently religious activities such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization. Therefore, organizations must take steps to separate, in time or location, their inherently religious activities from the services funded under this program. Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against Federal funding of inherently religious activities, can be found at the HHS web site at <http://www.os.dhhs.gov/fbci/waisgate21.pdf>.

3. Reporting Requirements:

Grantees will be required to submit program progress and financial reports (SF-269 found at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>) throughout the project period. Program progress and financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final program progress and financial reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period.

Program Progress Reports: Quarterly

Financial Reports: Quarterly

Suggested formats for the quarterly and final program progress reports will be sent to all grantees after the awards are made.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Program Office Contact:

Susan Greenblatt
Deputy Director
Division of State, Tribal and Local Assistance
Office of Child Support Enforcement
Aerospace Building, 4th Floor - East
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: 202-401-4849
Email: sgreenblatt@acf.hhs.gov

Grants Management Office Contact:

Sylvia M. Johnson
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management
Division of Discretionary Grants
Aerospace Building, 4th Floor - West
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: 202-401-4524
Email: SYJohnson@acf.hhs.gov

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

ACF will not send applicants an acknowledgement of receipt for applications received during the application period. Additional information about this program and its purpose can be located at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/> .

Date: 02/21/2006

Margot Bean
Commissioner
Office of Child Support Enforcement